

PROCRASTINATION KNOCKOUT

**Finally become more productive, happy
and in charge of your life**

**VERA JM FRISEN
VERAJM.COM**

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PROCRASTINATION



KNOCKOUT

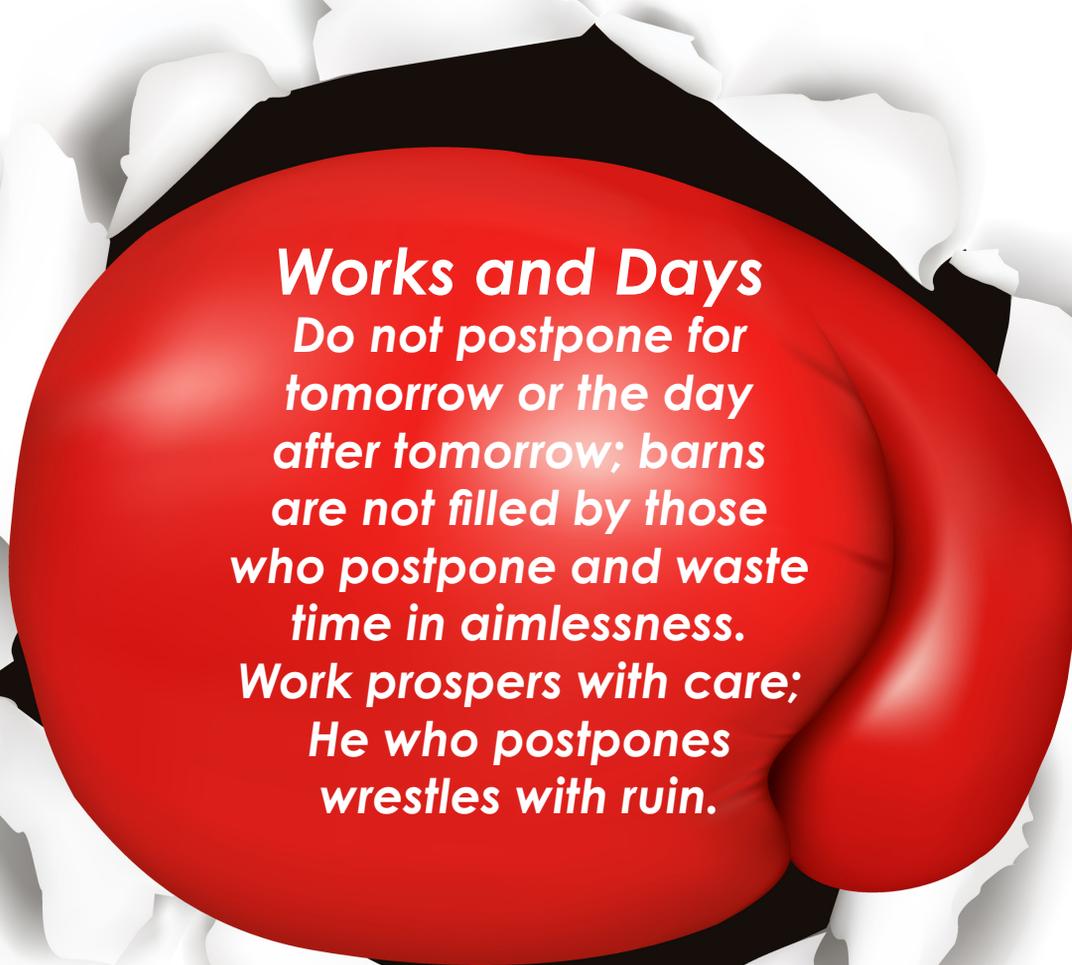
*Finally become more productive,
happy and in charge of your life.*

VERA JM FRIESEN

VERAJM.COM



**To my 3 children Victoria,
Matthew and Olivia,
Thank you for always inspiring me to
reach new levels in my life / business
and who continue to motivate my
heart to do my best every day.
I love you all, Mum.**



Works and Days
*Do not postpone for
tomorrow or the day
after tomorrow; barns
are not filled by those
who postpone and waste
time in aimlessness.
Work prospers with care;
He who postpones
wrestles with ruin.*

Table of Contents

Introduction	9
Chapter One: Let's Face Procrastination Together	13
Why people procrastinate	14
Psychological or Emotions	15
Reasons We Procrastinate	16
Why It's Harmful	18
Next Steps	20
Chapter Two: Recognizing & Halting Procrastination Habits & Patterns	23
Recognizing Procrastination Habits and Patterns	24
Halting Procrastination Habits and Patterns	26
9 Ways to Change Your Behaviour	28
Encouragement for Procrastinators	29
Next Steps	30
Chapter Three: Becoming More Productive and Avoiding Procrastination	33
Becoming More Productive	34
Improve Productivity	35
Productivity Strategies	36
Using Tools for More Productivity	38
Next Steps:	40
Chapter Four: Making Productivity a Life-Long Habit	43
Develop Good Habits	44
Systems and Automatic Processes	45
Daily Routines	48
Habit vs Routine	48
Lifestyle	50
Conclusion: Moving Towards Productivity	53
What's Next?	53

Introduction

Welcome to a new world of facing your procrastination once and for all. You're a fighter and I recognize how much courage this has taken you to get to the point of reading this book. I'm proud of you but I will lovingly nudge you along so you can be free from the things that hold you back.

I wrote this book to encourage you so you can get results quickly on your own and with the intention that you may want to hire me after you've had those results.

I want you to know from the depth of my heart that I'm here to support you through the pages of this book.

So what is this book about?

The first thing I want you to look at is what procrastination is to the core and more importantly, why you do it. When you think of someone who procrastinates, you probably think they are lazy and unmotivated.

New research into the psychology of procrastination suggests the problem is not only with your willpower, but with your emotions and other factors. In fact, procrastination is a result of psychological, inherited, and environmental factors.

From there we will uncover how to recognize your procrastination habits and patterns. Procrastination happens to everyone, even those who are highly productive. The only difference is the productive person's ability to recognize procrastination or their excuses to be more accurate, for what they are. Then they learn how to beat procrastination using a calculated approach that includes why they procrastinate and then apply strategies to beat it.

Next you'll learn how to overcome and stop procrastination and we will go over 9 ways to change your behaviour.

After that we will look at how to make productivity a lifelong habit and make your plans for the future to overcome procrastination once and for all. Becoming more productive is about doing what you need to do in the most efficient way. It's about using techniques, systems and routines to keep you focused and taking action.

At the end of each chapter I have shared a **next steps** section plus the worksheet and

checklist PDF, which is included as a bonus to really get you going. This book exists for you to read, discover for yourself and take action.

Reflections:

- You can't do everything by yourself.
- Always ask for help when you need it.
- People will help you more than you think.

Important: *This book is meant for you to explore, write things down, put check boxes, check marks beside things you've discovered, highlight things you need to remember and want to work on. I'd love to see your book used up as much as the worksheet and checklist.*

This is some of the most important work of your life. I urge you to please take this time to discover all you can about yourself in these pages. Use pens and highlighters and get it down on paper. This book is here to help you, not for you to just read it and put it down.

I truly believe this book will help you overcome procrastination. The one thing I want to leave with my children and grandchildren is the legacy of getting things accomplished that support their purpose here on this earth.

While reading this book you may decide you would like to hire me to help you push through procrastination so you can get back to business.

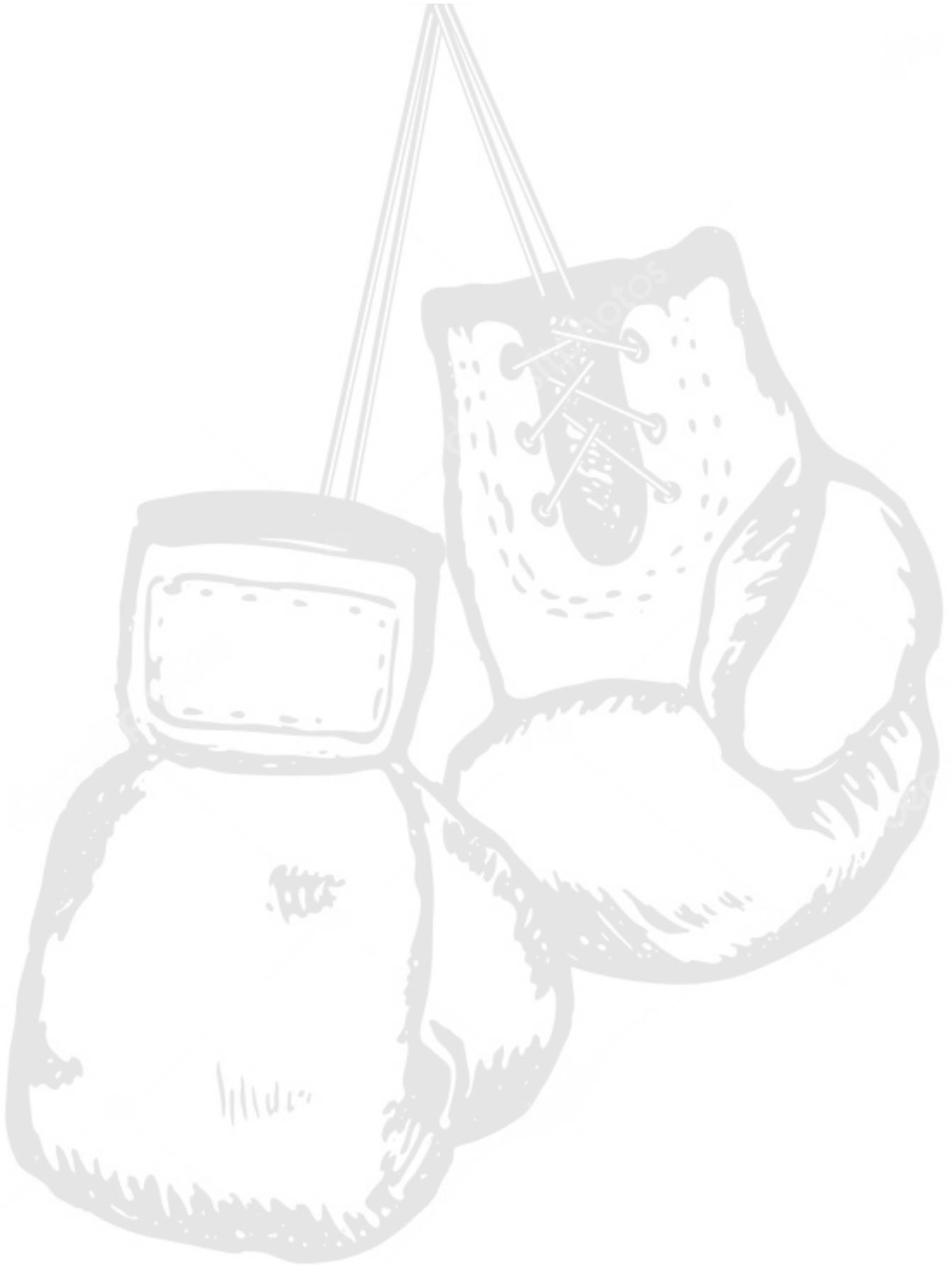
If so you can book a call with me here:

ProcrastinationKnockOut.com/call

I look forward to helping you get unstuck, overcome procrastination and get back to your business and life's work. I'm here for you.

Sincerely,

Vera JM Friesen



A large, vibrant red boxing glove is the central focus, appearing to burst through a jagged hole in a white paper surface. The glove is positioned with its wrist strap on the right side. The text is printed in a clean, white, sans-serif font in the center of the glove's palm. The background behind the glove is a solid black color, which contrasts sharply with the white paper and the red glove. The overall composition is centered and has a strong visual impact due to the high contrast and the metaphorical nature of the image.

**CHAPTER ONE:
LET'S FACE
PROCRASTINATION
TOGETHER**

Chapter One: Let's Face Procrastination Together

“Procrastination is the bad habit of putting off until the day after tomorrow what should have been done the day before yesterday.” Napoleon Hill

Procrastination became a major issue in my life and a disruptive after effect of having to make serious medical decisions for my child and as I navigated a divorce.

When life got back to normal, I started to put my head in the sand and starting ignoring all of the things I needed to take care of in my life and business. I knew if I wanted to keep my business that things were going to need to change immediately but I continued to procrastinate.

Why did I procrastinate on such simple things that need to be done?

I know I'm not the only one to procrastinate. We've all done it. We refer to ourselves as the king or queen of procrastination, in a totally self-defeating way.

Instead of doing the task needed, we find ourselves putting it off. Maybe you have a report due but instead of doing it you find yourself cleaning the kitchen, taking out the trash, doing the laundry or a million other things.

People have suffered with procrastination since early times as seen in the classic Greek poet Hesiod wrote in his poem:

***Works and Days
Do not postpone for tomorrow
or the day after tomorrow;
barns are not filled by those who postpone
and waste time in aimlessness.
Work prospers with care;
He who postpones wrestles with ruin.***

Someone who postpones and wastes time in aimlessness could be the description of today's procrastinator.

It's easy to procrastinate. We can simply put off the task until later. In fact, a 2007 study showed that 80 to 95 percent of college students procrastinated on a regular basis, most often when it came to completing assignments and coursework.

Not only students procrastinate. According to Joseph Ferrari, a professor of psychology, "around 20 percent of U.S. adults are chronic procrastinators. They delay doing things at home, work, school and in relationships." (source: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-9280.1997.tb00460.x>)

What is procrastination, anyway?

Procrastination is the action of delaying or postponing something to a later time. For example, you need to buy food but put off going to the store until tomorrow. Or you find yourself scrolling social media, filing paperwork or rearranging your folders on your computer instead of finishing an important project that's due at work.

Many people don't realize they are chronic procrastinators. It's simply become a habit to put things off to do later. Other people procrastinate when they are afraid of doing something or are bored with the project.

But those are just a few of the reasons why we procrastinate. In this guide, you'll learn the reasons why we procrastinate and how they can harm us in life. You'll also see how procrastinators differ from non-procrastinators.

Then, in the following three guides, we'll help you recognize your procrastination habits and put a halt to them, so you can become more productive and avoid procrastination. In the final guide, you'll learn how to make productivity a life-long habit.

"Procrastination is the bad habit of putting off until the day after tomorrow what should have been done the day before yesterday." Napoleon Hill

Are you ready to get started? Let's go!

Why people procrastinate

When you think of someone who procrastinates, you probably think they are lazy and unmotivated. This is the commonly held view of what procrastination is. It's the belief that procrastinators don't know how to manage their time.

Although some of the time it might be true, this is not always the case. New research into the psychology of procrastination suggests the problem is not only with your willpower, but with your emotions and other factors. In fact, procrastination is a result of psychological, inherited, and environmental factors.

Let's examine the reasons why we procrastinate more closely.

Psychological or Emotions

“Procrastination is not a time-management problem, it's an emotion-management problem,” says Tim Pynchyl, an associate professor of psychology at Carleton University and blogger at *Psychology Today*. (source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/dont-delay/201607/procrastination-101-its-not-about-feeling-it>)

Our mood and emotions regulate how we feel when approaching an activity. Procrastination, then, is an emotions management issue.

Positive emotions have us jumping into the activity.

If we expect a task or activity to feel good we go for it, like watching television, playing video games or eating ice cream.

Negative emotion, on the other hand, means we will do what we can to avoid feeling bad. For example, we feel resistance towards doing our taxes, washing the dishes, going to the gym, or doing school or work tasks.

Things that cause us to feel bored, uncomfortable, afraid, frustrated, etc., causes us to procrastinate. Instead of forcing ourselves to do the task, we procrastinate by doing things that give us a good feeling. Our emotions cause us to procrastinate.

This is the one thing that holds me up, although my work is a lot of fun there are definitely a lot of mundane tasks that need to be taken care of.

Business doesn't wait for me, either I'm improving and making sure things are done or I'm not.

I have been learning how to not just jump into the fun stuff all the time because when it comes down to it, money won't flow into my business if I don't handle the foundation of it well.

“Medical imaging studies have shown that mathphobes, for example, appear to avoid math because even just thinking about it seems to hurt,” explains Barbara Oakley in *A Mind for Numbers*. “The pain centers of their brains light up when they contemplate working on math.”

It's always the same thing. We want to do what we need to do even if it feels bad and brings up some resistance. We have intentions of following through, but our negative emotions make us feel uncomfortable. We then avoid the task for as long as possible by doing something that is more enjoyable.

Genes

Some researchers think procrastination is an inherited trait. Researchers from the University of Colorado did a study of human twins. They found that identical twins share

more similarities in their behaviour as compared to fraternal twins. (source: <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/releases/exploring-the-genetics-of-ill-do-it-tomorrow.html>)

The study showed that procrastination, just like impulsivity, is inherited. They believe this trait may have come from our nomadic ancestors in their short-term survival plans.

Environmental

Often there are things in our daily lives that we perceive as a cause for our procrastination. These excuses of why we procrastinate often include family obligations taking up our time and people or situations that cause us to procrastinate. We blame our circumstances when we put off doing something. Sometimes we blame procrastination on not having the right tools or that we can't work any faster (meaning we need to be more productive).

But you can't blame procrastination on one thing and magically be able to change it. In fact, both conscious and subconscious traits are the reason that we procrastinate.

Reasons We Procrastinate

One of the things we do when we procrastinate is to use excuses. I have many of my own personal excuses that I use on myself, let's dive more into the excuses we create for ourselves.

These excuses are often founded in our subconscious as fears, anxiety, or some other form of behaviour that keeps us from taking action.

- **Fears or Anxieties.** Fear of failure is one of the top reasons people procrastinate. We fear the unknown and procrastinate to avoid pain. Fear of failure includes a low self-confidence level, anxiety over what will happen if you fail and fear you can't meet your own expectations.
- **We do everything we can to avoid an unpleasant situation.** We procrastinate to avoid being told no or ridiculed. We stay in our comfort zone to avoid rejection.
- **Overwhelm.** Procrastinators often avoid tasks because they don't know where to begin. They don't break the big project down into little projects but try to tackle it all at once. Or they have several small tasks that all need to be done and they don't know where or which one to begin with. So instead of doing the tasks, they avoid doing any of them as long as they can.
- **Overconfidence.** Some procrastinators are so confident in the task that needs doing that they put it off to the last minute. They believe they know how to do the task or are confident they can complete it without preparation, so they put it off.
- **Perfectionism.** Along the same lines as overconfidence, perfectionism keeps you from doing or finishing a task. Perfectionism is often described as someone who pays

excessive attention to detail, resulting in preoccupation with task that causes them to complete the tasks. They procrastinate for fear that they won't do the job right.

- Lack of motivation and accountability. Sometimes, especially for those who work alone, we don't have specific deadlines or bosses keeping us accountable. Procrastinators may set goals but lack the motivation or someone to hold them accountable to reach them.
- Indecisiveness. People procrastinate because they can't make decisions quickly. They can't decide which course of action to take or which decision to choose before they can move forward with action. Over-thinking the situation leads to analysis paralysis.
- Vague or abstract goals. When your goals are vague, you are more likely to procrastinate than if you had clearly defined goals. A vague goal like "start exercising" is more likely to lead to procrastinating than a more concrete one like "go to the gym everyday after work, walking on the treadmill at high speed for 30 minutes."
- Disliking the task. Procrastination often happens when you are averse to the task you need to do. When you find a task unappealing, you're more likely to want to do anything to avoid it. There are many things about a task might cause you to procrastinate. The task might be frustrating, boring, or tedious. You might procrastinate because of your lack of competence in doing the task.
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Procrastinators often blame their ADHD. They say their disorder makes it hard for them to concentrate on a single task for long, instead jumping from task to task without finishing any. Although research shows that there is a significant correlation between ADHD and procrastination, the symptom of inattention is the main reason for procrastination by those who have ADHD.
- Depression. Someone suffering from depression will often procrastinate. This is because depression causes them to have difficulty concentrating, have fatigue and a reduced interest in most activities.
- Low energy levels. This can be either physical energy or mental energy. Tired after working hard all day can make you procrastinate towards things you need to take care of.
- Laziness. Your intrinsic unwillingness to put forth effort to do what you need to is a driving force behind procrastination. Laziness, however, is often caused by an underlying reason such as anxiety or fear of failure.

There are other underlying reasons why we all procrastinate at some point, but these are the most common. To understand why you procrastinate, you need to know what's causing you to do it.

Why It's Harmful

“There is nothing so fatal to character as half finished tasks.” — David Lloyd George

No doubt, you've discovered why you have been procrastinating but did you know that continued procrastination can be harmful to you in many areas of your life?

People who are chronic procrastinators find they pay their bills late, start work on big projects the night before they're due, do their holiday shopping the day before the holiday, or file their income tax returns after the deadline.

Health

This type of behaviour can affect how they see themselves, their stress levels, and even their health. Stress itself can have negative impacts on your health including insomnia, headaches, colds and flus, high blood pressure, stiff muscles and obesity.

Chronic procrastinators delay healthy behaviours like eating healthy, exercising or getting enough sleep. They pull all-nighters to get projects done while eating unhealthy foods. This can lead to diabetes or heart disease as well as low energy levels, shorter lifespan and loss of vitality.

Procrastinators often have a lack of self-control. This can lead to engaging in activities that might physically cause harm such as smoking, drug abuse, or overeating.

Social

Procrastination can also harm your social life as well. When you put things off, you are putting a burden on others to pick up the slack. Your family, friends, co-workers or others who depend on you can become resentful when you wait until the last minute to do something.

A recent study by Psychological scientist Fuschia Sirois of Bishop's University in Quebec reports that a tendency to delay tasks despite the negative consequences can significantly increase hypertension and cardiovascular disease. (source: <https://www.sheeld.ac.uk/psychology/staff/academic/fuschia-sirois>)

Success

“My mother always told me I wouldn't amount to anything because I procrastinate. I said, just wait.” — Judy Tenuta

Procrastinators normally operate under their full potential. They are wasting time watching TV, surfing social media or the internet or any other form of distraction instead of working

hard and getting things done.

Procrastinators don't plan and make goals. And when they do, they don't follow through or fall short of the end because they procrastinated and made excuses why they couldn't complete their goal.

When you procrastinate, you take a risk of losing your job or miss out on promotions. You're looked over because you can't meet deadlines or achieve your monthly targets. Being a chronic procrastinator can damage your reputation as well. You say you will do something but don't is making empty promises to others. People will see this and stop depending on you.

Life Satisfaction

Procrastinators are not as happy as those who are successful and productive. They are unhappy because they are less successful in their career, relationships, finances, health, or any number of areas of their life.

People who procrastinate tend to be very self-critical. They put off doing what they would like to do or need to do and then give themselves a mental beating over it. This type of self-sabotage, results in even more procrastination.

Having a life filled with constant disappointment and self-criticism keeps them from finding happiness. They feel guilty for not doing what needs to be done, for letting others down and for their own lack of follow-through.

Every procrastinator feels like their life is one of missed opportunities, wasted potential, shame, guilt, and disappointment. They have low self-esteem that creates even more unhappiness.

“The really happy people are those who have broken the chains of procrastination, those who find satisfaction in doing the job at hand. They're full of eagerness, zest, and productivity. You can be, too.”— Norman Vincent Peale

Procrastination not only damages a person's physical health but can affect how they see themselves, who they socialize with, and how successful they are. Stress, not taking care of your health, low self-confidence and a lack of follow through all build up to create damage that can hurt you in the long term.

Ouch! This have been hard for you to read but this book is about being real about the situation. The good thing is, by finally admitting to what you're doing, you can decide to make a change.

Next Steps

In this book, you're learning why we procrastinate and how it affects us. Procrastination isn't necessarily a serious problem unless it begins to have a serious impact on your daily life. That's when it becomes more than a time management problem.

We procrastinate because we don't want to do something because it's boring or we don't know how to do it.

Procrastinators are known for their excuses. They have one for almost every situation. If they have a big project due soon, they might use the excuse that they don't know where to start or, on the opposite end of the spectrum, that the project is easy for them so they can wait until the last minute to tackle it.

Begin by looking at the real reason you procrastinate. Next time you catch yourself saying you'll do it later, stop, and really examine why you are.

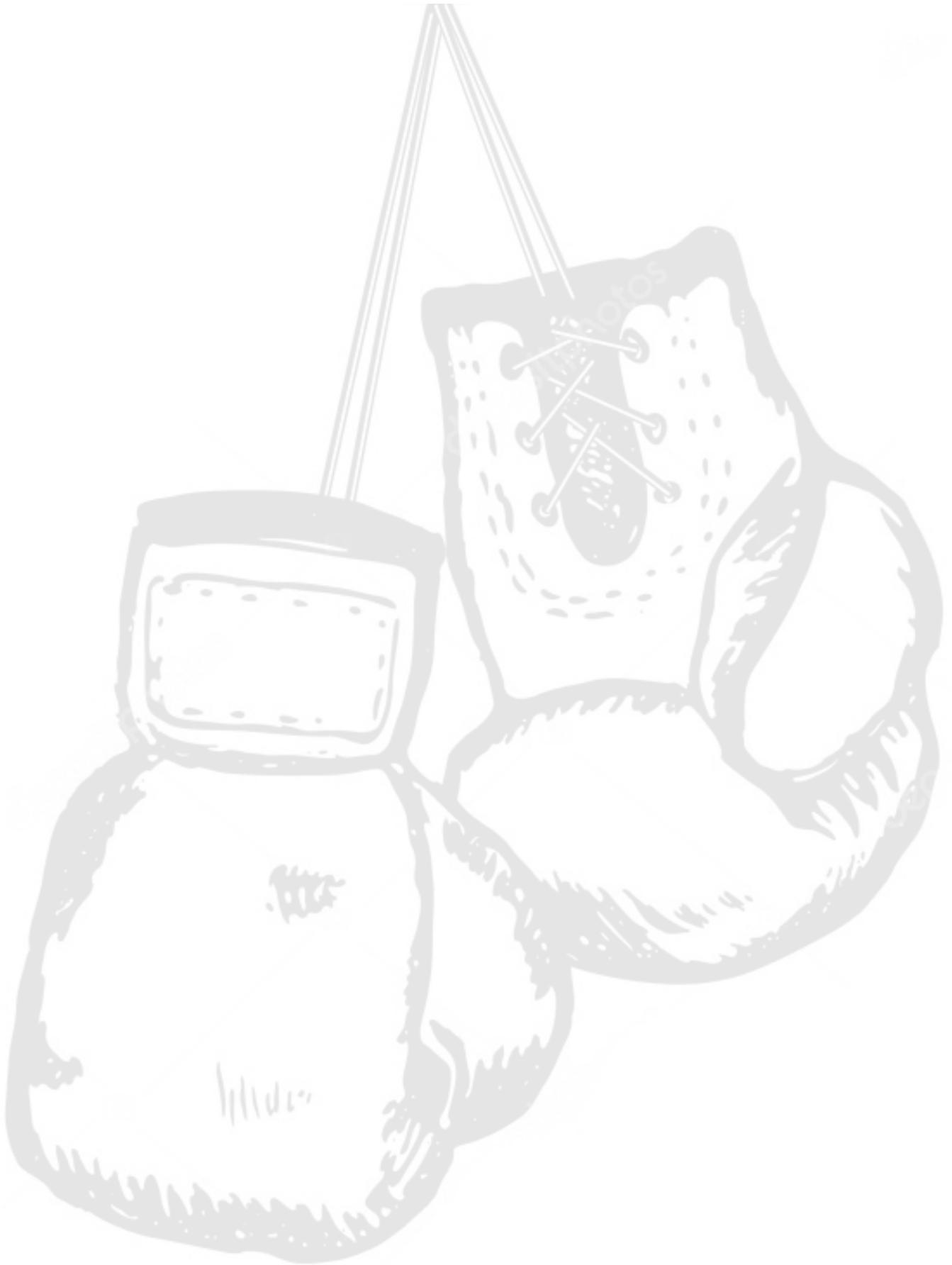
- Are you afraid you'll fail because you always have in the past?
- Is procrastination something you saw growing up in your family?
- Have you allowed procrastinating to become a habit because you are not interested in the task?
- Maybe it's due to your self-esteem level, confidence in your abilities, or your negative thoughts that keep you from taking action.
- Thinking it has to be perfect before you can finish it can keep you stuck in constantly putting off a task until you can do it perfectly.

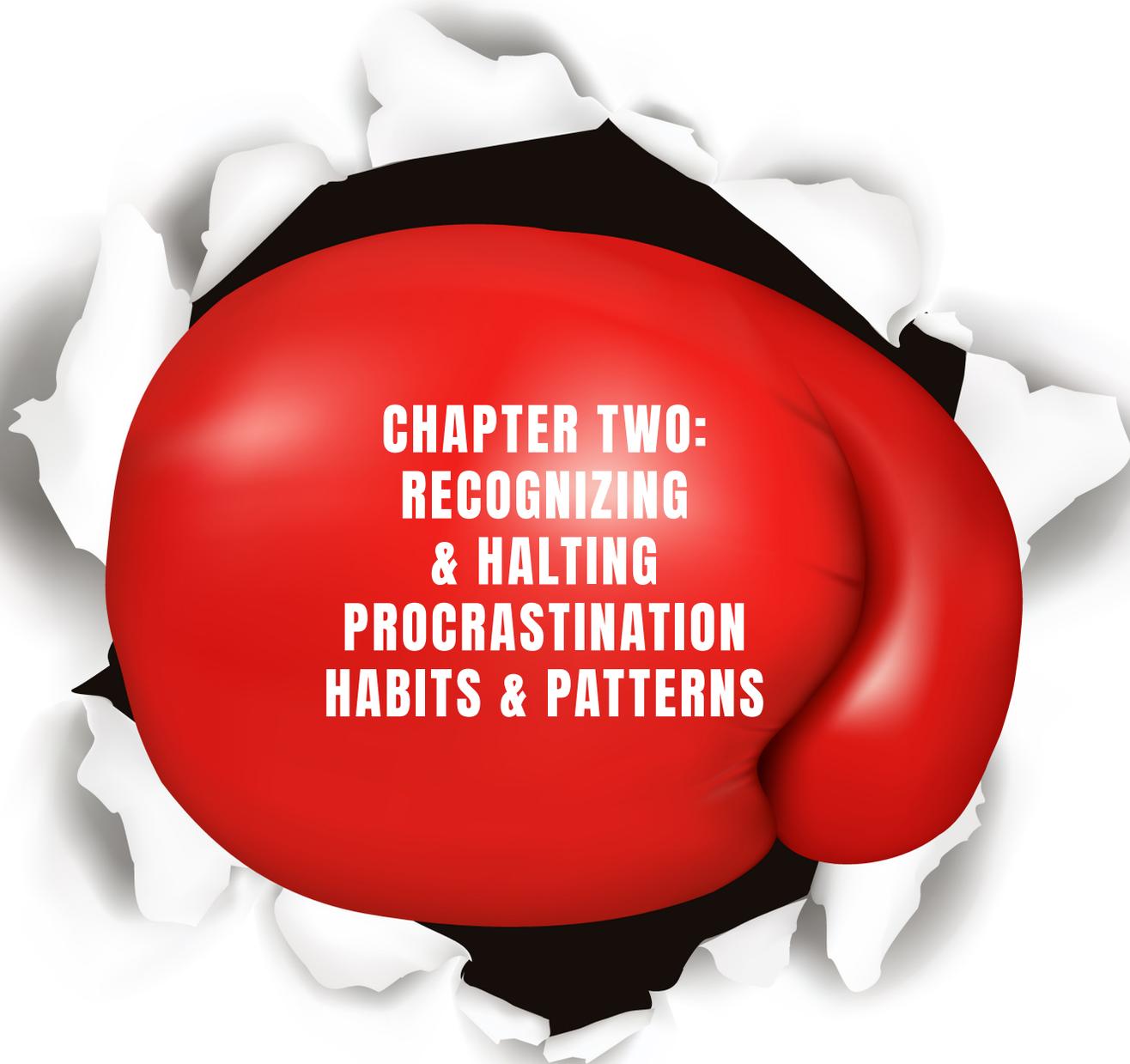
Now that you know why you procrastinate, you can begin taking steps to start changing that behaviour. I'll give you a few ideas in this book that will get you started. Every time you catch yourself falling into the old procrastination pattern, stop and ask yourself if it's helping you or keeping you from succeeding.

Then, just start the task.

“Once we begin a task, no matter how dreaded, our perceptions of the task change...we don't appraise the task as quite so stressful or difficult once we get started. Starting is everything.”— Tim Pychyl

Once you understand why you procrastinate it's time to begin learning how to stop those habits and be more productive. I hope this book helps you recognize and put a halt to your procrastination habits and patterns.





**CHAPTER TWO:
RECOGNIZING
& HALTING
PROCRASTINATION
HABITS & PATTERNS**

Chapter Two: Recognizing & Halting Procrastination Habits & Patterns

“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.” — James Baldwin

We all occasionally put off doing something. When it becomes a habit and a pattern in our everyday existence, it becomes a problem.

I don't feel like...

I don't want to...

I'll do it tomorrow...

These are all phrases that naturally come out when they are faced with a task that needs to be done. They often come out sounding whiney with a “poor me” tone to them.

Procrastination happens to everyone, even those who are highly productive. The only difference is the productive persons ability to recognize procrastination or their excuses to be more accurate, for what they are. Then they learn how to beat procrastination using a calculated approach that includes why they procrastinate and then apply strategies to beat it.

Procrastination isn't just poor time management or laziness. It often comes from negative emotions that keep you hostage from taking action. People put things off because they're not in the right mood, then they distract themselves with other tasks. Then when you realize what you are doing, you feel guilty for wasting so much time. Your mood worsens because you feel guilty. Your task deadline gets closer and you feel worse.

This continual loop of self-destructive behaviour can only be broken when you discover what is causing you to procrastinate.

Most of us experience guilt when we procrastinate. We become our own worst enemy. We know what we should be doing and what's in our best interest, but we don't follow through. The Greeks called it *akrasia*- the weakness of will; acting contrary to what we know is in our best interest.

Procrastinators are excellent at making excuses. The trick to beating procrastination is to recognize the habits and patterns that cause you to procrastinate and make changes that put a stop to the behaviour.

Previously we learned why you procrastinate and how it can be harmful. Now we'll be digging deeper into recognizing your procrastination habits and patterns and finding ways to put a halt to them.

Are you ready to get started?

Recognizing Procrastination Habits and Patterns

*"I do my work at the same time each day —
the last minute." — Source unknown*

Before you can beat procrastination, you have to recognize the habits and patterns of your own procrastination behaviour.

You can do that by considering these three factors:

When You Procrastinate - Ask what situations cause you to procrastinate. Is it more at work or home? Do you struggle to finish tasks or to start them?

How You Procrastinate - Ask yourself what you do when you find yourself procrastinating. Are you stalking social media, watching TV or finding unimportant tasks to complete?

Why Do You Procrastinate - What is causing you to put off doing something? Are you distracted or do you feel overwhelmed?

Do you recognize yourself in any of these patterns?

- You fill your day with low-priority tasks or what you feel like doing at the moment.
- You leave important items on your to-do list for a long time.
- You start a high-priority task but then go make coffee or surf social media.
- Find yourself reading emails several times without making a decision on what needs to be done.
- You think it has to be the right time to tackle a specific task.
- Notice you are doing unimportant tasks for other people instead of doing the important ones on your list.

- Tell yourself it's okay to put off doing something you're afraid to do. You think if you don't address it, it'll magically go away, or someone else will do it.

Each of these patterns leads to loss of productivity from procrastination. You probably have other habits or patterns that promote putting things off. Let's look at a few of them.

Making Excuses - People often come up with excuses or validations to justify their behaviour. Each of these excuses though, is simply that: an excuse. Are you using any of these excuses for not taking action?

- Not knowing how to do something, but afraid to or won't ask how
- Not knowing what you need to do, not having a plan
- Don't care when something gets done
- Forgetting to do something, intentionally or not.
- Blaming sickness or bad health problems on the delay
- Don't want to do something because it's boring, difficult, not interested
- Don't care if it gets done or not
- Using the habit of always waiting until the last minute to do something
- Saying you work best under pressure
- Had to do something else first before you could do the task
- Blame it on lack of sleep, distractions, family
- I'll fail anyway so why even start
- I'm not a morning person, I'll do it later
- This is more difficult for me than it is for others
- Blaming our circumstances- I don't have an office, don't have all the things I need to do the task, no one will leave me alone so I can work

Perfectionism - Do you freeze up when it's time to start on a task or project because you know that it won't be perfect? If you think you can't do something until you can do it perfectly, it's a form of procrastination. And when we're waiting until the right moment to start- everything has to be perfect first, we may never start. How do you know it won't be good enough or perfect if you don't do it?

Avoidance Tactics - Are you putting off doing something because it's boring or unpleasant? This can be anything from paying bills to opening that letter from the government. Putting off tasks because we're not in the mood to do it is another form of avoidance.

Unorganized or Lack of Direction - Poor organization can lead to procrastination quickly. You might also be stuck because you don't know what steps to take to perform a task. When you lack organizational skills or having a prioritized direction for your to-do list, you are more productive. You're more likely to feel less overwhelmed and find it easier to take action.

Analysis Paralysis - Do you find yourself overanalyzing how to do a task, or a decision? Overanalyzing something keeps you from taking any kind of action. Analysis paralysis can also come from having poor decision-making skills.

Uncomfortable Tasks - Fear of failing or succeeding keeps you from doing tasks that you don't know how to do. When you fear success, you're afraid you'll be swamped with requests to do even more tasks.

Useless Tasks - You spend a good part of each day checking Facebook, searching the internet for non-work-related stuff or working on easy tasks because they are simple to complete.

Delay Work & Decisions - Do you find yourself constantly putting off the work until the night before it's due? This pattern of procrastination keeps you stressed, in panic mode and you may find yourself missing deadlines often.

We all have certain habits or ways of doing things that can hinder or help us in our daily productivity. Whether your procrastination habit or pattern is big or small, recognize them when you are doing it so you can begin taking steps to halt the behaviour.

Halting Procrastination Habits and Patterns

“No more excuses or procrastination! Stop allowing your days to be stolen by busy nothingness and take calculated steps towards your goals.” — Steve Maraboli

Once you recognize the patterns and habits, you can begin putting a halt to them. You probably won't break them overnight, but you can begin by setting up strategies that will help you.

In order to get out of the routine and habit of habitually procrastinating, you have to create new routines and order in your life. Begin by taking small, daily steps in that direction.

Every day simply tackle the task right in front of you. Then move on to the next one. It will require hard-work and diligence, but the payoff is discipline, productivity, and happiness. You'll no longer be lost on what to do, and you will find life is much easier when you don't put things off or wait until the last minute.

If you have too many tasks to tackle or don't know what needs to be done, begin by listing all the tasks you need to do on a daily and weekly basis. Then write down the big tasks with the date they need to be done by. Next, break big tasks into smaller ones.

(Here's a trick that might help on those deadline-oriented tasks: set your deadline in your calendar for a few days before it's actually due. This tricks your mind into thinking it's due sooner)

- Commit to doing the tasks. Write the tasks down that you need to complete in your calendar with a specific time each day to do them.

- Give yourself a reward for completing a difficult job on time.
- Get an accountability partner to check up on you. Consider using an online tool like Procraster (<http://procrasterapp.com>) to help self-monitor yourself.
- Tackle tasks as soon as they arise. Don't let them go for another day whenever possible.
- Turn your internal dialog into positives. Instead of "need to" or "have to," say "I choose to," which implies that you are in control of your time.
- Get rid of distractions by turning off social media and email notifications.
- Do the most unpleasant tasks first thing each day or at your peak time.
- Focus on the long game especially when doing unpleasant tasks. Identify the long-term benefits of completing the task. Also, identify the unpleasant consequences of not doing the task as well.
- If procrastination is a problem because you are disorganized, make it a point to implement strategies to get organized.
 - Keep a to-do list so you don't conveniently forget tasks
 - Prioritize your to-do list for tasks you need to focus on first
 - Learn to master scheduling and project planning so you can plan your time effectively. Use time-management and task-management apps to help you
- If overwhelm is causing you to delay projects, learn how to break them down into smaller, more manageable chunks. Focus on starting them, working in bursts. Or create an action plan to organize each step of the project.
- If analysis paralysis is keeping you from taking action, look at ways to help you make decisions and move on.
- You learned to procrastinate from your parents, siblings, or another person, who had an "I'll do it later," attitude. You need to think about the negative consequences they faced when they procrastinated. Find new role models to mimic, ones who are action takers and have positive results because of it.
- If you procrastinate because you don't think that you are good enough or you don't know how to do it, consider taking a course, asking for help or use self-affirming statements like "I can learn as I work on this."
- You procrastinated because you underestimated how quickly it would take you to do the task. You underestimate how long it takes as well as how quickly you can do it. Instead, start earlier than you think you need to and work on completing the project early.
- You think it has to be perfect and it keeps you from getting started. Instead of putting the importance on doing things perfectly, emphasize the importance of completing on time. Make a list of examples when your perfectionism was unhelpful and of the times when task completion was more helpful.

- You use your depression, anxiety or other condition as an excuse to delay tasks. If you know you have a condition that diminishes your motivation or concentration, get the proper treatment with a licensed therapist. They can help you set achievable goals for your condition and show you how to break your tasks into more manageable steps.
- You procrastinate because you compare yourself to others and find yourself lacking. Instead of comparing yourself, focus on improving yourself and doing your work to your best ability. That's all anyone asks of you.
- You procrastinate when you are not comfortable with the task or situation. Challenge yourself to step out of your comfort zone and engage in a task, even if it's only for a little while.
- You really just don't want to do the task that day. Instead of doing simpler tasks or unrelated tasks, plan out the big task that needs doing and start it.

9 Ways to Change Your Behaviour

“The really happy people are those who have broken the chains of procrastination, those who find satisfaction in doing the job at hand. They're full of eagerness, zest, productivity. You can be, too.” — Norman Vincent Peale

You recognize you have some habits and poor behaviour patterns that are causing you to procrastinate on tasks. Here are 9 ways you can change your behaviour to be more productive. You'll feel more confident, less stressed and your reputation for completing tasks will improve.

- Write down tasks that you've been putting off. This puts the project back in the front of your mind so you can't ignore it.
- What are your feelings towards the task? Procrastination is an emotional reaction with three core emotions driving it. Do you fear that you won't get the task done on time or well enough? Are you angry because you are doing something you hate? Are you sad because you feel like you can't do the task? Dig down to identify the emotions behind your procrastination pattern.
- Now get rid of those emotions. Do what you need to so you can release the emotions before they build up inside you. In private, shiver to get rid of fear, stomp around to release anger or have a good cry to release sadness.
- Turn destructive thinking into something constructive. If the task you need to do brings about negative thoughts, find an alternative positive way of seeing the task.
- Break big tasks down into a series of small doable steps. Map out each part of the project.

- Congratulate yourself at each small step you accomplish. Reward yourself in some way. This motivates you and helps keep fear at bay.
- Anticipate obstacles that could pop up along the way to completing the task.
- Take action on the steps or task you've been putting off. Fight any resistance you have about doing it. Fight excuses, bad moods or other discouragements you might want to use to keep from doing the task.
- Finish the daunting task and enjoy the win. Accomplishing what you were once avoiding can simplify your work or personal life, giving you more energy, better sleep and a feeling of success.

When it comes to changing your behaviour from one of procrastinator to productive accomplishment, it means taking responsibility for your thoughts and actions while forcing yourself to follow through.

Encouragement for Procrastinators

“Don’t wait. The time will never be just right.” — Napoleon Hill

Procrastinators are big avoiders. They use excuses to keep validating why they don't begin or finish tasks. They find it difficult to make decisions. It can stem from many things as we've seen such as laziness, perfectionism, fear, or depression.

- First, forgive yourself for procrastinating. This helps you feel more positive about yourself. And may help you reduce the chances of procrastinating in the future.
- It's okay to struggle but be intentional about finding something that works for you.
- Remember, you are not the only person who procrastinates, fears, struggles, finds things difficult to do, or feels bored with certain tasks. Reach out to others for encouragement.
- Practice doing what feels difficult or out of your comfort zone every day. It helps you overcome the difficulty and build confidence in your abilities.
- For each task you complete, you're building good habits and setting good examples for others.
- You'll feel less frazzled and more at peace when you change your habits to being productive over avoidance.
- It doesn't have to be perfect.
- By doing what you are supposed to do when you're supposed to do it you gain the freedom to relax or do what you enjoy.
- You are worth it. The work you do is worth it.
- You can do it.

- Use affirmations to keep your thoughts positive about tasks you don't enjoy.

Next Steps

Make no mistake about it. Bad habits are called 'bad' for a reason. They kill our productivity and creativity. They slow us down. They hold us back from achieving our goals. And they're detrimental to our health. - John Rampton

Successful people don't make excuses. They simply push past it. The best way to stop procrastinating is to keep it out of your life. But if you're already a chronic procrastinator, you can get rid of procrastination by making small, meaningful changes.

Begin by writing out tomorrow's schedule and to-do list. Create a schedule for every task on your list and hold yourself accountable in some way. Imagine how great you will feel once you have accomplished the tasks.

Overcoming procrastination habits and patterns takes willpower and finding ways to reduce the resistance you have to the task.

You can build your willpower by:

- Meditating
- Using mindfulness techniques
- Having self-compassion and forgiving yourself
- Managing your energy levels
- Time management techniques
- Exercising
- Reducing your decision- making fatigue

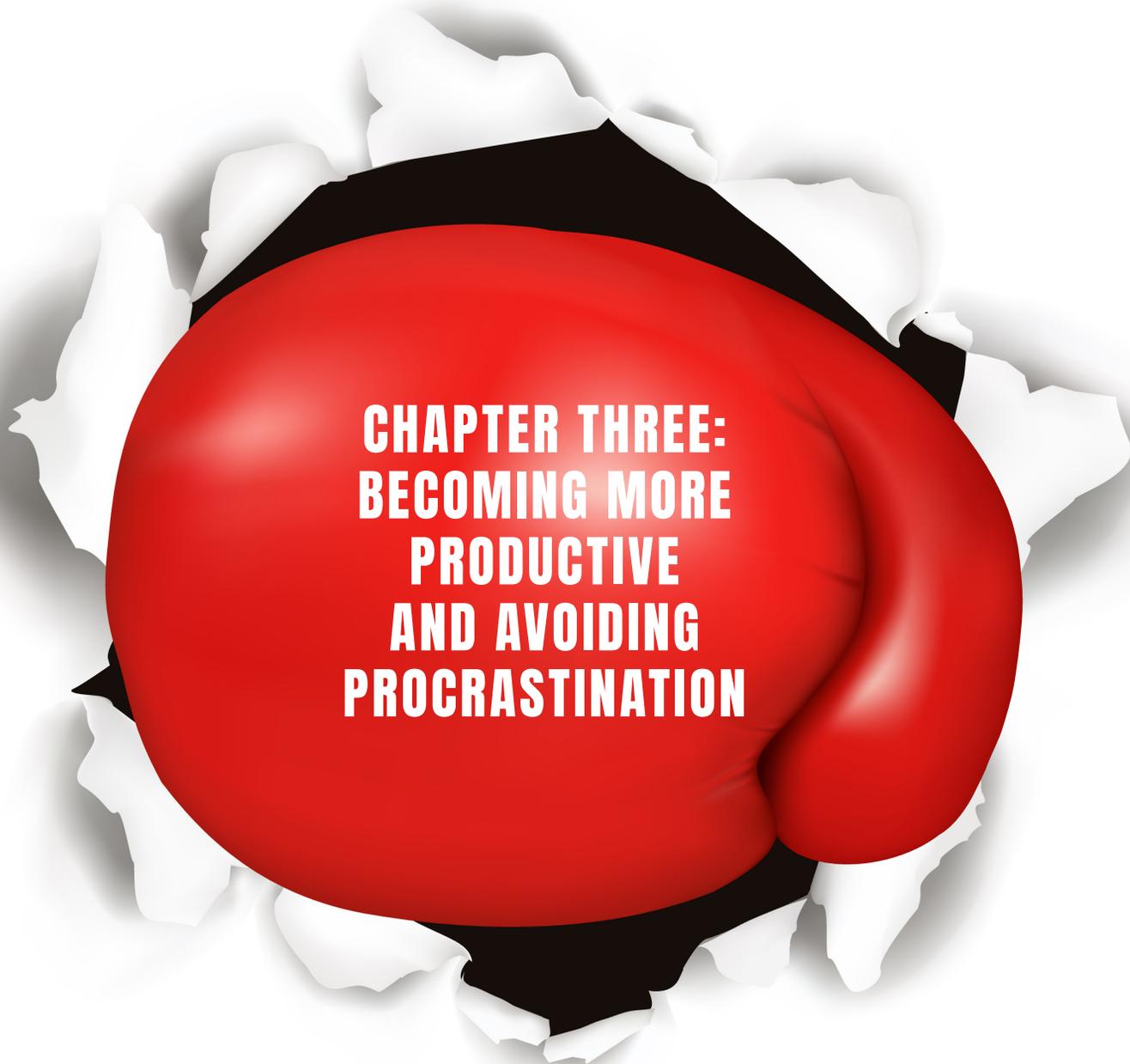
You can reduce your resistance by:

- Setting timers
- Focusing on just getting started
- Breaking complex tasks into smaller steps
- Using blocks of time to complete tasks
- Setting up a schedule to complete projects
- Having an accountability partner or app

Breaking your procrastination habits and patterns requires that you actively think about why and when you are procrastinating. When you catch yourself making an excuse, you are starting to break the habit of procrastination.

Now that you know what you need to do to halt your procrastination in its tracks don't wait. Start with one task right now you can finish quickly. Then go to the next chapter to learn about becoming more productive to beat procrastination.





**CHAPTER THREE:
BECOMING MORE
PRODUCTIVE
AND AVOIDING
PROCRASTINATION**

Chapter Three: Becoming More Productive and Avoiding Procrastination

“Focus on being productive instead of busy.” - Tim Ferriss

So far, you’ve learned why you procrastinate and how it can be harmful. You recognized your habits and patterns that cause you to procrastinate and how to halt them. In this chapter, we’re going to get into how to become more productive so you can avoid procrastination.

You’ve probably read books, blogs, and guides regarding how to quit procrastinating to get more done. I get it. We all want to be more productive. Maybe you’ve even had some success but still tend to procrastinate.

Being productive is more than cranking out 30 pages of copy or cleaning your entire house in a day. Being more productive, you are starting and finishing tasks and projects on time. You don’t put off tasks but jump in and do them.

Becoming more productive is about doing what you need to do in the most efficient way. It’s about using techniques, systems and routines to keep you focused and taking action.

Driven, ambitious, and successful people tend to have lots of goals. They also have routines they follow and systems they use to keep them on track to meet their goals. They spend their time wisely, being productive to fulfill tasks related to their goals.

But not everyone is as productive. Even with all apps, bots and other intellectual shortcuts, productivity is at an all time low. In a study by VoucherCloud (*source: <https://www.vouchercloud.com/resources/office-worker-productivity>*), it was found that in an 8 hour workday, the average employee is only productive for 2 hours and 53 minutes. That’s only 36.25% of the time. Which means 5 hours and 7 minutes of the day is being wasted.

With so much time wasted, how are we getting anything done?

You’ve seen how procrastination can take up too much time, keeping you from succeeding,

finishing and actively living. In this chapter, we're going to be looking at how to become more productive in our daily lives. There are strategies and techniques you can use, as well as apps and tools that help you and routines you can put into place.

Let's begin.

Becoming More Productive

"You can't get much done in life if you only work on days when you feel good." – Jerry West

Becoming more productive involves changing the way you are doing things now.

Here are 11 ways to be more productive:

- **Make a to-do list but be sure it's reasonable.** You don't want to overwhelm yourself with too many tasks. Most of the time our lists are too complex or the tasks on them are unbalanced. Maybe one task takes a long time while others take a few minutes. This distributes our time in an unbalanced way. What happens then is our to-do list ends up not getting done. We procrastinate on it.

Instead, create a list that is balanced with no more than 3 to 5 tasks on it. They should all be about the same length of time to finish.

- **Set small goals for each of your tasks.** With a large project or new assignment, break down the tasks into smaller goals. What pieces and assets are needed? Who do you need to talk to first? What steps need to happen first? Then set up timelines with estimates of how long each goal will take to accomplish.
- **Focus on one big goal at a time so you know what is important to finish first.** You set up projects that focus on the goal and make sure they are done before you commit to working on another big goal.
- **Track your time to help you understand your work habits and the time of day you work best.** Track your time efficiently so you know when you're checking email, how often you visit social media or favourite websites and how long you spend doing actual work. Time tracking gives you a better understanding of how long a task will take. That way when you have to repeat it, you'll know how long it takes. You can use an online tracker, a journal, or any other method that works for you.
- **Delegate and follow up with others such as team members on projects you work together on.** Look for a method that doesn't require a lot of your time and energy to use. Consistently use collaboration tools and project management software.
- **Figure out when your peak hours are.** You might be a morning person or a night owl. During business hours, figure out when you work best and do your harder or more

strategic work at that time. Leave the other time for meetings and easier tasks.

- **Decide on one task and then do it.** Break up longer tasks into shorter segments but do that one task until it's finished before starting a new task. Use the Pomodoro technique of 25-minute blocks of time with short 5-minute breaks for these longer tasks.
- **Declutter and get rid of stuff.** Okay so this isn't being productive per se. But it will help you be more productive. Your physical environment impacts your work. When you are surrounded by clutter and have to hunt for whatever you need you lose time. In a way, it leads to procrastinating because you can't find what you need.
- **Fit in exercise, even if it's just a walk around your office building.** Exercise helps you be more productive by increasing your alertness, making you less anxious, more focused, and able to deal with stress.
- **Do similar tasks together. It's hard to refocus when we switch between tasks.** We get distracted and forget why we were doing something. Instead, group similar tasks together such as responding to all of your emails at the same time or making all your phone calls in the same block of time.
- **Don't multi-task either.** Switching between tasks makes you tired. You end up not doing your best at any of the tasks. Use apps to turn off social media and other distractions.

Changing how you do things can greatly change your productivity and help you avoid procrastination. Use apps and programs to help you make changes to how you are doing things.

Improve Productivity

“Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out.” – Robert Collier

You know you'd be much more productive if you could stop procrastinating. With all the distractions in our technological rich world, it's easier than ever to put off doing what we need to do. These six strategies can help you avoid procrastination and become more productive.

Break it down. Big projects can be daunting. The trick is to break them down into specific tasks before you put anything on your to-do list. Instead of the overwhelming task of planning the annual conference, for example, you break it down to “email 3 hotel venues for quotes” and “review potential keynote speaker websites.” This way, your brain has clear directions on what to do. Spend a few extra minutes to break large projects into small tasks.

Just seven minutes. If you just don't want to do something, don't try to do the whole thing

immediately. Instead, set a timer for seven minutes. Shut off all distractions by turning off notifications, ringers, television, and the internet. Close your door or put on your headphones and get to work. Give the task your full attention for seven minutes. When the timer goes off, stop if you want or continue working.

Give yourself cues. This is called implementation intention. It helps you build new, positive habits. The concept is to commit to engaging in your desired behaviour when you get a specific cue.

For example:

- When you put toothpaste on your brush, it's time to get out the floss as well.
- When I sit down at my desk each morning, I write in my book for a set period before checking emails or social media.

Give yourself a reward. To stop procrastinating and be more productive you can give yourself incentives as you work through tasks. This works especially well if you tend to procrastinate on big projects. Instead of promising yourself the reward when the job is finished, give yourself incentives after completing some of the tasks related to the project.

Ask for help. When you put off a task you don't enjoy, ask for help, or outsource it to someone else. Hire someone on TaskRabbit to run errands for you. Hire a personal organizer to take care of your overflowing garage.

Work from your mood. Put proactive flexible time in your schedule to allow for days when your energy is low. During this time, work on simple tasks or batching tasks that don't require a lot of energy or thought. Or use the time for creative time such as for creative writing or creative ideas.

These six strategies will help you become more productive while avoiding procrastination. Each one works as a starting point in changing your behaviour.

Productivity Strategies

“Action is the foundational key to all success.” – Pablo Picasso

So far, we've talked about the different ways you can become more productive. Let's dig deeper into some of the best strategies for being more productive every day.

Strategy #1: Set Daily Goals

A main reason why people procrastinate is they are floundering on what exactly to do right now. They know they want to lose weight, earn more money, or grow their business. But they don't know what to do daily to get to those goals.

This lack of clarity in the ‘what to do now’ will cause you to procrastinate. To counteract this, set daily goals of what you need to do each day. Write down a list of 1 to 5 goals you want to achieve that day. Make the goals specific and in line with your bigger goal or project.

They should be clear and precise like:

- Finish my landing page
- Write a blog post on XYZ
- Create an offer for traffic building

Strategy #2: Schedule Your Time

You know what you need to work on; but, if you don’t schedule it, you won’t know when to work on it. That enables you to procrastinate and keep putting it off. Instead, schedule your entire day the night before. This way you know exactly what you need to do and when to do it.

With the 1 to 5 goals you already set for the day, schedule the tasks into your calendar for each goal. When will you work on goal 1 and goal 2? This creates a plan of attack for your day so all you have to do is follow and execute it.

Strategy #3: Chunk Into Bite Sized Tasks

Breaking a large goal or project into its smallest of tasks keeps you from being intimidated by the size of the project which can lead to procrastination. It allows you to focus on taking the next step and then the next and so on.

Begin by writing down the project or goal. Under that, list all of the tasks and steps you need to take to accomplish it. If you aren’t sure of all the steps, you can add them to the list later, as you become aware of them. This is your master list.

Then transfer 3 to 5 of these tasks to your daily schedule. Each time you complete a task, cross it off the list. You’ll begin to see how you are getting closer to the goal and be less overwhelmed by the scope of the project.

Strategy #4: Get Rid Of Distractions

Procrastination comes from being distracted. Remove all forms of possible distractions when you’re working so you can focus and avoid procrastination. Put away your phone, turn off social media and other notifications, and disable the internet. Put in your earplugs and get to work.

Don’t watch the TV while you work but do turn on focus music that won’t distract you.

Strategy #5: Take A Break

Stand up, stretch, or do some kind of movement every hour. This short 2-minute break allows you to refresh your mind and body so you can stay focused longer.

Strategy #6: Prioritize for Productivity

With so many obligations and to-do's its easy to fall behind on some things. But if you prioritize the 1 to 5 tasks that are the most valuable and important and focus most of your time on them, you'll make progress on your projects and tasks.

Becoming more productive happens when we learn to prioritize and schedule what needs to be done. Use these strategies to get started so you can avoid procrastination.

Using Tools for More Productivity

“Tomorrow becomes never. No matter how small the task, take the first step now!” - Tim Ferriss

One thing you can do to be more productive is to find ways to make productivity easy, quick, and more organized. The way to do this is to implement specific tools that will do some of the tedious work for you.

Here is a variety of apps and tools that will make you more productive.

Project Management and Schedulers

Why use project scheduling tools? Because they help define project workflow, keep your team focused on the right task, waste less time rescheduling, free up your time, and help you visualize and adjust when needed.

- Asana (<https://asana.com/>) features a project planning calendar and timeline for mapping out your project. You can create, visualize, and manage task, deadlines, and team members. It integrates with over 100 apps as well. Basic is free. Other levels have a monthly fee.
- ProjectManager (<https://www.projectmanager.com>) has flexible project views that are perfect for managing multiple projects. Monthly fee.
- Celoxis (<https://www.celoxis.com>) is the all-in-one project management tool with an automatic scheduling feature. Monthly fee.
- Trello (<https://trello.com>) is a management software application that lets you easily collaborate with team members with it's flexible platform. It's boards, lists and cards let you organize and prioritize projects in a way that fits your needs. Free to paid-monthly.
- Basecamp: (<https://basecamp.com>) This is the management software I used for many years when I had an entire team of writers, virtual assistant's, my main virtual assistant and other contractors. Basecamp is simple by design and not complex like other project management tools. Free trial to paid monthly.

Time-and-project management software

Time management software and apps help you keep track of how much time you are spending on specific tasks. They also help keep track of commonly repeated tasks, which makes invoicing and pricing easier and most work on multiple devices.

- Toggl (<https://toggl.com>) lets you track time spend on tasks and keeps them organized by team, client, project or tag. Free to paid-monthly.
- Todoist (<https://todoist.com>) is a task-management and organizer app. It helps you stay on top of what needs to get done with a calendar view for a click glance at the week or month ahead.
- Timely (<https://timelyapp.com>) is a time-tracking and scheduling app that keeps tabs on how long your projects take while keeping your workweek organized efficiently. Monthly fee.

Calendars/Planners

- MyLifeOrganized (<https://www.mylifeorganized.net>) is a to-do list and daily planner. It can break big tasks down into subtasks. Free and paid versions.
- Calendar (<https://www.calendar.com>) is a smart app that lets anyone choose and book a meeting from your Calendar. It automatically transcribes all your meetings, saving you time from this task.

Other useful apps:

- Pocket (<https://getpocket.com/>) is a bookmarking app that allows you to bookmark web content to come back to later. Free
- Focus@will (<https://www.focusatwill.com>) is a unique time management app. It helps you maximize your time while playing soothing music and sounds. From their website, “Focus@will is a new music service based on human neuroscience. It helps you focus, reduce distractions, maintain your productivity and retain information when working, studying, writing and reading. The scientifically tested technology behind focus@will has been shown to alter brain activity toward a state that is more conducive to productivity.” Monthly fee.

Journals/planners

If you're old school, or just love the feel of a pen and paper, there is a wide variety of planners, journals, and calendars you can buy to keep you organized and on track with your tasks. Price varies.

Productivity apps

Apps to keep you on track range from simple password managers to note taking tools.

These simple apps help you save time and get organized.

- Procraster (<http://procrasterapp.com>) is a procrastination-busting app, which is compatible for the iPhone and iPad, helping you overcome your blocks to taking action on what you need to do.
- LastPass (<https://www.lastpass.com/hp>) is a strong password generator and password manager. You can sync your password vaults and have LastPass automatically fill in forms and login details.
- Hootsuite (<https://hootsuite.com/plans/free>) is a social-media management tool that lets you write your posts and schedule them to post later.
- Evernote (<https://evernote.com>) is indispensable for organizing and keeping track of your thoughts and ideas.
- Microsoft office suite for your word processing and data management needs.

This is just the tip of the vast array of apps, tools, and software available in today's technological-rich workspace. Staying productive is easier than ever when you use them to keep you organized, on track and streamlined in how you work.

Next Steps:

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing” – Walt Disney

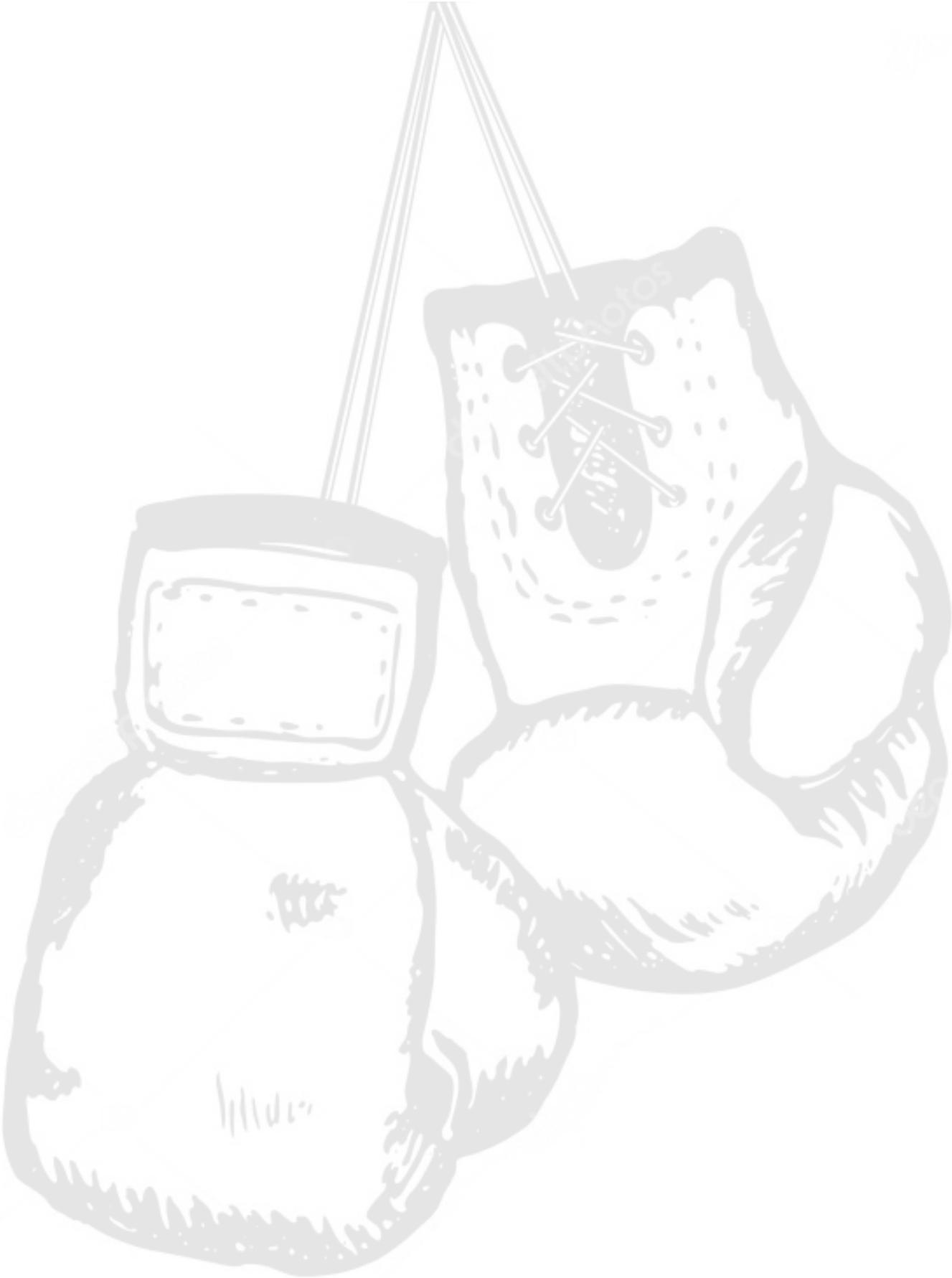
Becoming more productive and avoiding procrastination is a matter of learning and implementing new habits, routines, and tools. It comes down to organization, goal setting, tracking, and action. Each of these works with the other so you can be your most productive.

Now that you have been given the strategies and habits needed to become more productive, the next thing is to begin implementing them.

Begin by getting organized. This means setting your goals, clearing the clutter, breaking tasks down to their smallest, changing your habits and setting up systems. Learn how to use available resources to keep you motivated to do the tasks so you can avoid getting hit with the procrastination but. Once you do that, you can begin making being productive a habit.

Set up a time in your evening to prepare for the next day. Add 1 to 5 priority tasks that have similar completion times into your schedule. Then take action each day on those tasks. Eventually you'll hit your goal, finish the project ahead of time, and feel good about not giving in to procrastination.

In the next chapter, we're going to learn how to be productive and avoid procrastination at life-long habit.



A large, vibrant red boxing glove is shown breaking through a jagged hole in a piece of white paper. The glove is positioned centrally, with its fingers curled and its wrist strap visible. The paper around the hole is torn and crumpled, creating a dramatic, three-dimensional effect. The background behind the paper is a solid black color, which makes the red glove stand out prominently. The overall composition is centered and visually striking.

**CHAPTER FOUR:
MAKING PRODUCTIVITY
A LIFE-LONG HABIT**

Chapter Four: Making Productivity a Life-Long Habit

Productivity is the deliberate, strategic investment of your time, talent, intelligence, energy, resources, and opportunities in a manner calculated to move you measurably closer to meaningful goals.” - Dan S. Kennedy

Making productivity a life-long habit is the best way to beat procrastination and avoid it in the long run.

Did you know that according to studies (*source: <https://hbr.org/2012/06/habits-why-we-do-what-we-do>*), between 40% and 45% of our daily actions are powered by habits? This means that you're working from a place in your subconscious mind. That can either work for you or against you, depending on how good the habit is.

Procrastination is a leading cause of lost productivity at work and at home. Procrastinators put off projects until the last minute for a variety of reasons, stressing as they try to finish the task. Instead of being ahead, they scramble to finish. Or they put off fixing the small leak in their kitchen sink drain until one day it completely breaks, and water floods the kitchen. Then they have to drop everything and attend to that problem.

These seemingly simple tasks turn into big time wasters. Procrastination steals your productivity, keeping you stuck in the “never-have-enough-time” mode.

When you begin implementing new habits and ways of being productive, you start to develop new habits. The trick is to turn those into life-long habits that keep you on the right path to success and happiness.

In the previous chapters you learned why you were procrastinating and how it was harming not only your physical and mental state but how productive you are. We talked about how

to recognize and put a halt to your procrastination and how to become more productive to avoid procrastination.

In this guide, we're going to take it a step further. We're giving you the tips and strategies you need to transform your good productivity habits into life-long behaviours.

Let's get started building life-long habits.

Develop Good Habits

Depending on what they are, our habits will either make us or break us. We become what we repeatedly do." -Sean Covey

How do you develop good productivity habits that will last?

We all know that one person who always manages to get everything done. They always seem to get their work done early and often, it looks like, with little effort. They're the ones who manage to finish an hour-long task in less than 30 minutes.

What do these productive people have in common and how do they do it? They do it by developing and maintaining good productivity habits. They've already learned to overcome challenges like:

- Procrastinating on tasks
- Pushing through boring work
- Responding to email efficiently
- Staying motivated and having energy throughout the day
- Focusing so they can finish their highest priority projects

They've learned to turn procrastination into productivity using healthy habits.

"...every time you have an urge and you do something about it, the reward you get from it (whether it's a tobacco high from smoking or the satisfaction of knowing you're at inbox zero) creates a neurological pathway in your brain.

When you repeat that action and experience the same reward again, the neurological pathway gets a little bit thicker. The thicker that pathway gets, the easier it is for impulses to travel down it. So when you try to extinguish a habit completely, you're actually trying to use willpower to destroy a neural pathway. It's possible, but it's pretty darn difficult for most people." - Lindsay Kolowich, [The Science of Productivity](#)

Instead of trying to eliminate an old habit, you'll be more successful by changing that habit by replacing it with a healthier one. You should diagnose the urge that sets off the habit. Then identify the reward you get from that habit. Finally, replace that habit with an activity

that is healthy and helps you maintain your progress.

Here's how to develop good habits that will stick in the long run.

- Start small. I mean ridiculously small. It's easier to make small changes than to try to create a big change quickly that requires a lot of willpower. Focus on building this small habit before adding more.
- Get hooked on the habit by putting a big red X on it each time you work on your productivity habit.
- Set clear intentions on when and where the behaviour is going to take place. Reframe your habit as an "if/then" statement, use habit stacking by linking your new habit to a habit you already have or implement into your schedule the new habit behaviour.
- Celebrate small progress. Reward yourself each time you make progress on creating a healthier productivity habit.
- Set up an environment that drives healthier behaviour. This can mean rearranging, decluttering, having the right tools or whatever will cause you to do the habit.
- Use a 30-day challenge to help you develop the best habits, systems, and routines that work for you. Decide what you want to improve. Write them on paper. Include your motivation, any obstacles you foresee, and the strategies you can use to overcome them.
- Start with a habit to focus on, regularly. Keep track of your progress each day. Then adjust as needed. After 30 days, see how your new routine is working for you. Doing the routine will become a daily habit after the 30 days and will be easier and a natural way for you to be productive.

Developing new habits and implementing them into your daily routine enables you to begin building life-long changes in how productive you are.

Systems and Automatic Processes

"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort." – Paul J. Meyer

Setup systems and use automatic processes that help you stay productive just by using the system. In other words, build a system for everything you do to keep your life on track.

In "How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big," author Scott Adams explains:

"... A system is something you do on a regular basis that achieves your odds of happiness in the long run. If you do something every day, it's a system. If you're waiting to achieve it someday in the future, it's a goal."

Systems make your life easier and provide you with the power of the habit, structure, and routine of a specific way of attacking your tasks, projects, and goals.

Many different systems can guide how you work and what actions you take to achieve what you want. If one doesn't work or give you the results you want, try a new system, or create one that works for you.

The trick is to take steps every day to stick to it until you find a system that works for you easily, every day.

Which type of productivity system should you use? Here are 8 systems

Types of Systems and How Each Part Works

- The Pomodoro Technique. You have probably heard of the Pomodoro Technique. This system helps you keep productive by working in sprints. You set a timer for 25 minutes. You work on your task during those 25 minutes. Then when the timer goes off, you take a 5-minute break. Taking a short break helps keep you focused.
- The Eisenhower Matrix. This task-prioritization system guarantees you are focusing on the right things. This system sorts tasks into four categories
 - Urgent and important: the tasks that are the highest priority on your list. These must be done immediately.
 - Important but not urgent. These are tasks that have a big impact on your goals but aren't urgent.
 - Urgent but not important. Some tasks feel important but aren't necessarily important. Tasks like answering most emails, booking travel or some meetings are urgent but can be done after tasks in your first two categories.
 - Not important and not urgent. These tasks shouldn't be prioritized. They can be eliminated or done after all your other tasks are completed. Things like scrolling social media feeds, watching television or mindless chatting at the office.
- The 12-Week Year System. Based on the book "The 12 Week Year" by Brian Moran and Michael Lennington, this system creates urgency. The idea behind the system is that with a normal 12-month year we tend to put off goals until November and December because we believe we have plenty of time to reach our goals set in January. With this system, however, think of the year as 12 weeks. This creates urgency and action.

In this system, you set goals for projects every three months. Then every week you set up tasks that you need to do in order to achieve the goal. Each week, month and at the 3-month time frame, you track your progress to see what needs to be improved.

- SMART Goals Method. This system helps you break your goals down into tangible, specific action tasks. Smart stands for:
 - S-Specific defined steps
 - M-Measurable goal that is trackable
 - A-Achievable and not too big to reach
 - R-Relevant, realistic and reasonable
 - T-Time-bound and time-limited to create a sense of urgency
- The “Seinfeld” Strategy. This system is about creating and implementing habits. This system is based on comedian Jerry Seinfeld’s simple but effective strategy to implement any new habits. Every day mark an X in your calendar after you’ve taken consistent action on your healthy habit.
- The Getting Things Done Productivity System. This system, developed by David Allen, is a five-stage workflow system. It includes the five stages of:
 - Capture all your material in your inbox and go through it once a day.
 - Clarify by asking yourself questions about every item to assign actions to each one.
 - Organize the items into action time blocks; these include trash, maybe, reference, list of tasks, complete immediately, delegate, add to the next action list, and added to calendar.
 - Reflect to define your next action and the desired outcome for projects that require multiple steps.
 - Engage or work on the tasks on your list.
- The 5-Second Rule. This system uses the concept that whenever you have an idea or an urge that you should instantly take action, within 5 seconds.
- Kanban System. This system helps you organize and execute all your projects and tasks. This is a project management system where you write down all the tasks related to a project. Then you organize them according to categories such as to-do, in process or done.

You start to build systems with one habit at a time. Focus on small progress and working consistently on the habits within a system to get things done.

Choose one or two types of systems that will work for you. It may take time to find ones that work for you, but you will see your productivity go up. By spending a little bit of time figuring out what works for you and your habits, you are more apt to use them to help you build life-long productivity habits.

Daily Routines

“You’ll never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine.” -John C. Maxwell

You know that creating healthy productivity habits and using a system that works for you are key in developing life-long habits. The final piece is creating routines.

Routines will transform your life more effectively than just changing the habit or putting the system into force. Most of us don’t realize how powerful having routines are. Routines help you by:

- Prioritizing what is important. They force you to think about tasks that are a top-priority to you, or what you want to achieve and then make choices on what you are going to work on.
- They help you know what you are going to be doing each day. This helps block out distractions.
- Habits free up your energy for important projects. Habits are what make up routines.
- Daily routines boost your creativity. Working consistently and putting in time allows your creative ideas to come through.
- Routines are what keep you moving forward. They help you see progress that motivates you to do more.

Habit vs Routine

A habit is a behaviour or an action that is an automatic response. It happens when you are triggered by something like an external notification or an internal feeling. You are then compelled to follow through with it.

A routine is a string of habits you use on certain times of the day. You could have a morning routine you follow when you first wake up or an evening routine when you get ready for bed. Most of us have some sort of routine for some area of our life.

It’s best to create a routine and ritual that is personal to you. Don’t try to copy what successful people are doing if it doesn’t work for you. Instead try to make your routine. Here are some routines you can try:

Morning Routine

- Wake up earlier and don’t hit the snooze button.
- Make your bed and straighten your room.

- Set your intentions and tone for the day. What are the most important tasks for the day? How do you want to feel: scattered or focused? Write them down.
- Spend time journaling to reflect on your goals, dreams, and feelings.
- Meditate or do yoga to prepare your mind for whatever the day brings.
- Read your bible and highlight a scripture that you can focus on for the day

Workday Routine

- Skip checking email and social media first thing in the morning. Set aside the first hour or more without checking your email or chats.
- Eat the frog or tackle the difficult stuff when your energy is at its highest. Everyone has regular ebbs and flows of our focus, productivity, and energy throughout the day. When you have a spike in this cycle, it's the perfect time to do the difficult tasks.
- Schedule regular, short breaks. Our minds naturally crave breaks after 90 minutes of intense work. Listen to your body and schedule breaks away from your screen or task. Take a brisk walk or spend time around nature to rejuvenate and recharge on your short break.
- Batch similar tasks to be done at the same time.
- Set and keep rules. It's especially important to keep hard limits on distracting activities. This can mean setting rules for how long you are on social media. It means catching yourself when you revert to old habits like watching too many YouTube videos before leaving for the day or staying up late watching movies. Use time-tracking tools to see when you are spending time on certain activities that aren't a priority.
- Schedule your email and instant messaging for a specific time. This can be once a day, or every 2 or 3 hours.
- Implement the Getting Things Done productivity system to help you stay organized. This life-changing habit, when built into your daily routine, helps you know what to work on and where it should go in your priority list and when it should be worked on.

Evening Routine

- The evening is when it's time to disconnect from work. Leave work at the office as much as possible.
- De-stress from the day by doing a personal debrief. Reflect on what you accomplished that day. Write down 3 good things that took place during the day. This routine helps you change how you perceive your day so you don't get pulled into the negative as easily.
- Make sure you have a place where you can be alone or at least have some "mental solitude" in your evening. Separate yourself from other people's thoughts and ideas and focus on your own. Write them down to get them out of your head.

- Pick up a hobby that helps you relax. Engage in what is called a mastery task. These experiences are engaging, interesting things you are good at. They can be challenging and mentally absorbing but always rewarding. Look for hobbies that include other people, are healthy like sports, exercise, or things that allow you to think and be alone.
- Get prepared for the next day with a routine that closes the current day. This can be straightening your desk, making a list of what you need to do tomorrow, journaling, or setting out clothes for the next day or for the gym.
- At least 30 minutes before bed turn off devices including cell phones, televisions, tablets and anything else that emits a blue light from the screen. This light can make falling asleep difficult.

The way you start your day, the routines you have during the day, and how you end your day, determines how productive you are going to be. It means developing routines that will guide you when you first wake up until you go to bed. This will help you build life-long productivity habits that will change your life.

Lifestyle

“Good well-being promotes good productivity.” – Lailah Gifty Akita

Having a healthy lifestyle is a key component in creating productive life-long habits that stick. How your body feels can affect how well you focus and can be productive. Ignoring your health is not an option if you want to be productive in every area of your life.

Mindset - Having a positive, healthy outlook on life can help you see things in a better light. Positive thoughts keep you motivated to do the tasks and follow the routines that must be done. Use affirmations and positive self-talk.

Exercise - How we move our bodies and our ability to be flexible is key to staying healthy and focused. Moving your body is a way to recharge your body. It's also a way to destress and explore ideas while you move. Do it every day if possible, but at least 4 days a week. Yoga, walking 20 minutes every day, or any other form of exercise that gets you moving is all that's required.

Healthful Eating - Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, lean meat, and good fats helps you stay focused and in good health. Avoid processed foods, foods high in bad fats and sugars. Eating healthy is another way to help you ward off stress and get better sleep.

Hydration - Water is a great productivity tool. Instead of heading to the coffee machine every time you get up, grab a drink of water. Carry a bottle of water with you as a reminder to stay properly hydrated. Our bodies depend on water to keep going. Dehydration can cause lack of focus, no motivation, low productivity and lack of energy.

Sleep - Getting regular amounts of sleep each night is necessary to stay focused and be productive. The recommended amount is 7 to 9 hours of restful sleep each night. Set up routines you can implement to help you relax and prepare yourself for sleep.

Health Care - Many people who procrastinate and end up with low productivity habits don't take regular care of their health. It's important to stay ahead of any problems with your health when you are building good productivity habits. This means regular checkups, visiting your health care provider when something isn't right, regular eye exams, and dental cleanings.

Vision Care - Give your eyes regular breaks throughout the day. Like many people, you are probably spending a great deal of time staring at a computer screen every day. This can cause the eyes to become fatigued, which in turn causes physical fatigue, decreased productivity and more errors in your work. Eye fatigue can cause minor irritations as well including eye twitching and dry eyes. Look away from your screen every 20 minutes for 20 seconds or so.



A large, vibrant red boxing glove is shown breaking through a jagged hole in a piece of white paper. The glove is positioned centrally, with its fingers curled and its wrist strap visible. The paper around the hole is torn and crumpled, creating a dynamic, three-dimensional effect. The background behind the paper is a solid black color, which makes the red glove stand out prominently. The overall composition is centered and visually striking.

**CONCLUSION:
MOVING TOWARDS
PRODUCTIVITY**

Conclusion: Moving Towards Productivity

Our lifestyle affects our focus and productivity in ways we don't often think about. But each part of our life interconnects with the rest. Getting good sleep, eating well, and exercising are just a few of the things that should be a part of your healthy habits for the long-term.

We've learned a lot about ways of making productivity a life-long habit in this book. Like any habit, the more you do it the quicker it will become a long-term part of your day. It's about learning what is causing you to procrastinate and why it's keeping you from being productive.

As you can see, building these healthy productivity habits to last involves doing something every day that changes the bad habit into what you want it to be. It takes work and discipline but in the long run it pays off with being better focused, more productive and able to accomplish more.

Through this book, you've learned why you procrastinate and how it can harm you. You know how to recognize when you're procrastinating and how to halt it quickly. You are becoming more productive. By implementing what you've learned, you are making productivity a life-long habit, which is how people develop and maintain success in multiple areas of their lives.

What's Next?

I have some goodies that will get you on track right away to productivity (I meant it when I said I'm here to help you get results) and also we can connect to see if myself and/or my team can help you move forward once and for all in your business.

Procrastination Knock Out Goodies

I also have some extra goodies for you at ProcrastinationKnockout.com/Goodies. This page will give you some key videos, challenges and more to start implementing into your life.

Let's Chat About Procrastination:

I'd like to invite you to have a chat with me on the phone. If you'd like to finally drop procrastination in your life, just go to ProcrastinationKnockOut.com/Call to set up a date and time to chat.

Work With My Team To Start Moving Forward In Your Business:

If you're procrastinating getting your business started and online, we can work together with my team, I would love to chat with you here, ProcrastinationKnockOut.com/Call and You can also find me at VeraJM.com. We understand this is not just a business you're building but a legacy you'd like to leave for your children and grandchildren.

I hope you enjoyed this book and feel that you have a clear plan in place to drop procrastination, finally become more productive, happy and in charge of your life.

